

PARTICIPATION BY THE PUBLIC

Community members are invited and encouraged to attend Loudoun County School Board meetings to observe public deliberations. The School Board welcomes comments from the public and believes strong community engagement is important to a successful school system. The public can participate in School Board or Committee meetings only during the public comment period. This policy provides a process for public comments.

A. Procedures for Public Comment at School Board Meetings, Public Hearings, and Committee Meetings.

1. The civility, decorum and respect for the functioning and dignity of the School Board shall be maintained at all times. When reasonable, the Chairman will warn a speaker of breaches of decorum or of these rules prior to terminating speaking privileges or taking other action to preserve the civility, decorum and orderly conduct of the meeting.

2. In order to protect student privacy under federal and state law, speakers may not address topics involving complaints about personally identifiable students. Speakers may communicate those concerns privately to the School Board.

3. Speakers shall refrain from vulgarity, obscenities, profanity or other like breaches of respect for the dignity of the School Board or other people.

4. These procedures are intended for those speaking from the podium and also those who are not at the podium directly addressing the School Board during public comment.

5. Members of the School Board shall not answer questions or respond directly to the public during the public comment period.

B. Sign-up Requirements

1. Regular School Board Meetings. Citizens may sign-up to make public comment electronically by visiting the Citizen Participation link on the School Board webpage or by contacting the Superintendent's Office at 571-252-1020. An email may be sent to public.comment@lcps.org in which case the sender will receive a reply with a link to the online Citizen Participation/Public Comment registration form for their completion. All speakers must sign-up prior to 5:00 p.m. the day of the School Board meeting. You will be asked to provide your name, address and telephone number, subject matter, and organization represented, if applicable. The Public Information Officer or designee will accept walk-in registrations in the media box at the back of the Board room up to five (5) minutes prior to the posted start time of the Board meeting.

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2. School Board Public Hearings. Speakers at public hearings shall limit their comments to the matter that is the subject of such public hearing. The same sign-up requirements would apply as stated in Paragraph (B)(1) above. Individuals may only sign up to speak once during a designated public hearing; a speaker may address the School Board at more than one public hearing, if additional public hearing dates are scheduled for different days.

3. Committee Meetings. Prior to the posted start time of the Committee meeting a designee will accept walk-in registrations in the posted Board room and/or conference room.

C. Distribution of Materials to School Board Members. Copies of materials for Board members should be given to the Public Information Officer or designee in the media box at the back of the Board room prior to the start of the meeting for distribution to Board members. Please provide 12 copies of materials. Under no circumstances will a speaker approach the dais.

D. Time Allotment. Speakers must limit comments to the time allotted by the Chair and announced prior to the public comment period. The Chair determines the time based on the number of speakers and the agenda, but not to exceed five (5) minutes.

E. Assistance. Those who need translation/interpretation assistance or a reasonable accommodation for any type of disability in order to be able to participate meaningfully in School Board meetings or public hearings should contact the Superintendent's Office at least three days prior to the meeting. The speaking time will be doubled for speakers requiring translation/interpretation assistance when requested.

F. Other Communications to School Board Members. The School Board also is open to receiving comments outside of school board meetings as an alternative means of public participation. To e-mail all members of the School Board, please use lcsb@lcps.org.

[Former Policy 2-29]

Adopted: 10/12/76

Revised: 6/22/93, 9/23/97, 6/27/00, 10/26/10, 3/24/15, 10/25/16

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